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ABSTRACT

The use of rhetorical voice in literature and news reporting is examined and its implications for classroom study of literature are discussed. Analysis is based on Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the novel and the definition of "voice" as an identifiable social role or position that a character enacts, and "ventriloquation" as the introduction of the author's voice. The theory of voice and ventriloquation is outlined and then applied to the speech of classroom literature teachers and news broadcasters. It is proposed that the theory can also be used to uncover implicit moral messages in these two forms of discourse. Five textual devices used to represent voices and evaluate them are identified and discussed: reference and predication; metapragmatic descriptors; quotation; evaluative indexicals, or tokens of particular language registers; and epistemic modalization, or comparison of epistemological status of the narrating and narrated events. Examples are drawn from literary works, teacher talk in a ninth-grade English literature class, and segments of television news broadcasts. Potential application of this approach to remove (or accept responsibility for) bias in reporting, teaching English-as-a-Second-Language, and improving communication in general are noted. (MSE)

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Implicit Moral Messages in the Newsroom and the Classroom: A Systematic Technique for Analyzing "Voicing"

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To native speakers, contextually-appropriate talk does more than communicate denotational content. As Goffman (1959;1974) and many others have shown, speakers inevitably adopt interactional positions with even the most mundane utterances. Knowingly or not, speakers position themselves with respect to others in the interaction, and with respect to implicit moral standards from the culture at large.

Goffman excelled at uncovering the ethically charged underside of everyday utterances. He could see and express through examples the ethical issues implicit in an interaction. This article builds on Goffman's insights, by providing systematic analytic tools for studying the interactional positioning and implicit moral evaluations he described so well. To do this, it borrows and sharpens the concepts of *voice* and *ventriloquation* from the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1935/1981).

In his theory of the novel, Bakhtin defines *voice* as an identifiable social role or position that a character enacts. Novelists portray characters as "speaking with different voices," by describing them and putting certain words into their mouths—the words of a longshoreman, a butler, a politician, etc. Novelists also *ventriloquate* their characters when an "authorial voice" enters, and takes a position with respect to a character. Ventriloquation is an author "speaking through" a character, by aligning or distancing him/herself from that character. Bakhtin claims that, whenever an author glosses or presents the voice of another, s/he inevitably takes some evaluative position on it.

Bakhtin's theory can be applied not only to novelists, but also to any speaker who represents another's speech. Teachers, for instance, evaluate characters and communicate implicit moral messages when they teach literature. Television reporters voice and ventriloquate the political candidates they cover. By analyzing pieces of classroom discourse

and news broadcasts, this paper shows how Bakhtin's theory—suitably systematized—can help us uncover implicit moral messages in classroom and broadcast discourse.

The first section below describes Bakhtin's theory of novelistic discourse, especially the concepts of voicing and ventriloquation. The second section presents a more systematic account of how speakers accomplish voicing and ventriloquation. The third section uses these more systematic techniques to analyze implicit moral messages in a ninth grade English classroom and in network news coverage of the 1992 American presidential campaign.

Voicing and Ventriloquation

Bakhtin's work on novelistic discourse has inspired much recent work in the social sciences. Researchers in educational sociolinguistics (Hicks, in press), moral development (Tappan, 1991), cognition (Wertsch, 1991), anthropological linguistics (Silverstein, 1988), and other fields have begun to use voicing, ventriloquation, and other Bakhtinian concepts. Bakhtin's work is sufficiently complex that we cannot claim to offer a comprehensive interpretation. But we can offer a more systematic account of textual devices that make voicing and ventriloquation possible.

According to Bakhtin's theory of language use, every word comes with certain social locations attached.

> There are no "neutral" words and forms—words and forms that can belong to "no one"; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents....All words have the "taste" of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions. (1935/1981:293)

To use language inevitably conjures up the social location(s) that go with the words used.

Language does refer to the world, and it does express the speaker's thoughts and feelings, but in doing this it also locates the speaker and what s/he is talking about at some

spot in the social world. The speaker claims to be the kind of person who uses these words, and the hearer is the kind of person who is spoken to this way. Only certain types of people would use "collateral damage" to refer to civilian war casualties: military personnel, someone trying to sound like an expert, or someone politically in favor of the war (but not a peace activist).

Bakhtin calls the words and constructions that go with each location a "speech genre." "Each sphere in which language is used develops its own *relatively stable types* of...utterances. These we may call *speech genres*. The wealth and diversity of speech genres are boundless because the various possibilities of human activity are inexhaustible" (1953/1986:60). All speech "tastes" of one or more speech genres. Or, in another colorful metaphor, every word "is filled with echoes of the other's utterance" (1953/1986:88). Every use of language reverberates with the echoes of a role, or a type of person, or an institutional setting.

Bakhtin calls the process of working out the social locations of speakers "voicing." To speak with a "voice" is to use words that identify oneself as being from a recognizable social location. "Voicing" is the process of blending several voices together into a coherent interaction. Bakhtin's metaphor for this process is musical: voices are "orchestrated" into a coherent whole. In conversation, this requires coordination among speakers. In the novel—which is Bakhtin's main focus—the artist represents events so as to orchestrate several voices into a coherent whole. What makes a novel coherent is not just plot structures or themes, but the way the novelist represents recognizable voices and juxtaposes them in imagined interactions.

Using the denotational power of language, novelists represent characters and events—the plot. But "the plot itself is subordinated to the task of coordinating and exposing languages to each other. The novelistic plot must organize the exposure of social languages and ideologies, the exhibiting and experiencing of such languages" (1935/1981:365). By representing characters and events, novelists bring to life a recognizable social world, with particular voices juxtaposed. (A "voice" and a "character" are not necessarily coterminous: one character can speak with several voices, and vice versa.)

Novelists use textual devices in their description of characters and events, to create a "symphony" of juxtaposed voices. Most of the devices Bakhtin analyzes involve the representation of characters' speech.

> A speaking person's discourse in the novel is not merely transmitted or reproduced; it is, precisely, *artistically represented* and thus—in contrast to drama—it is represented *by means of* (authorial) *discourse*. But the speaking person and his discourse as the object of discourse are highly specific: one cannot talk about discourse as one talks about other objects of speech—mute things, phenomena, events and so forth; such discourse requires absolutely special formal devices of speech and its own devices for representing words. (1935/1981:332)

The novelist's art is often to represent characters' speech so as to lay out a set of social locations, juxtaposed in some way. Specific devices for representing speech are discussed in the next section below.

This representation and juxtaposition of voices is not "objective." An authorial voice always moves among and evaluates the various voices in a novel. (The author's and the narrator's voice may be different, which adds another layer of ventriloquation. This complication will not be discussed here.) Readers hear the author's voice in the way characters' speech is represented.

> A prose writer can distance...himself, in varying degrees, from the different layers and aspects of the work. He can make use of language without wholly giving himself up to it, he may treat it as semi-alien or completely alien to himself, while compelling language ultimately to serve all his own intentions. The author does not speak in a given language (from which he distances himself to a greater

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> or lesser degree), but he speaks, as it were, *through* language, a language that has somehow more or less materialized, become objectivized, that he merely ventriloquates. (1935/1981:299)

The authorial voice comments on the social world it represents, but not explicitly. Largely through linguistic devices for representing speech, the novelist characterizes some voices as alien to him/herself and others as much closer. The author communicates his/her own social and ethical positions by "ventriloquating"—identifying more or less closely with—characters' voices.

When Dickens, for instance, parodies petty bureaucrats, he is evoking a recognizable social role and distancing himself from it in a particular, evaluative way. Dickens lampoons his petty bourgeois characters. He achieves this by contrasting their conceptions of themselves with an authorial commentary on their true social character. To present his own position, Dickens ventriloquates the characters' words. Bakhtin gives an example from Dickens' *Little Dorrit*:

> It was a dinner to provoke an appetite, though he had not had one. The rarest dishes, sumptuously cooked and sumptuously served; the choicest fruits, the most exquisite wines; marvels of workmanship in gold and silver, china and glass; innumerable things delicious to the senses of taste, smell, and sight were insinuated into its composition. *O, what a wonderful man this Merdle, what a great man, what a master man, how blessedly and enviably endowed*—in one word, what a rich man! (book 2, chapter 12; quoted in Bakhtin, 1935/1981:304, emphasis Bakhtin's)

As presented here and earlier in the novel, the character Merdle speaks with a definite voice: a rich businessman who is admired by others, and admires himself, because of his wealth. In this passage Dickens parodies Merdle and his fawning admirers, and exposes their hypocrisy. In the italicized sentence, the admirers praise Merdle for his exemplary qualities. But Dickens' voice enters at the end—and claims that, despite their fancy praises, they admire Merdle only for his money.

So novelists do not just objectively represent social worlds. They do not just voice their characters. They also ventriloquate them.

> Therefore the stratification of language—generic, professional, social in the narrow sense, that of particular world views, particular tendencies, particular individuals, the social speech diversity and language-diversity (dialects) of language—upon entering the novel establishes its own special order within it, and becomes a unique artistic system, which orchestrates the intentional theme of the author. (1935/1981:299)

The novelist juxtaposes certain voices so as to convey an evaluation of them. "The prose writer makes use of words that are already populated with the social intentions of others and compels them to serve his own new intentions, to serve a second master" (1935/1981:299-300).

A novel's "theme" is not merely a denotational message. The novel's power comes from its implications for readers who live in social worlds with voices like those orchestrated in the novel. Any significant novel goes beyond the lives of its characters to assess some aspect of the social world in general. So the social world (as pointed to by language) is both the mechanism through which the novelist works and the object about which s/he intends to speak.

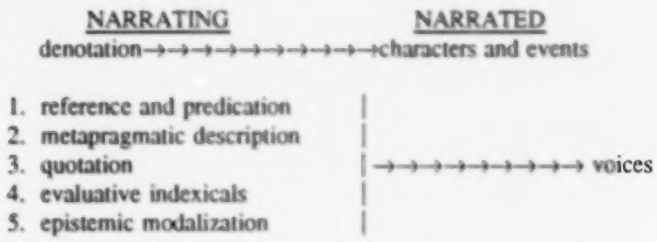
Any speaker talking about others occupies a position partly analogous to a novelist's. Like novelists, speakers present others as if they spoke with certain voices. Especially when they represent others' speech, speakers cast others in specific social positions. Speakers also ventriloquate those they talk about. Speakers inevitably identify with certain voices while distancing themselves from others—thus conveying an evaluation of the others they describe. In the process, speakers send implicit moral messages to their audience. To see how this works, we need to understand the textual devices used for voicing and ventriloquation.

Textual Resources for Voicing and Ventriloquation

Describing a verbal interaction relates two events of language use, the *narrating* and the *narrated* (Jakobson, 1957/1971; Silverstein, 1976). A classroom discussion, for instance,

is a narrating event. The content talked about—say, the characters and themes of a novel—is the narrated event. In the narrating classroom interaction, as illustrated below, teachers can send implicit moral messages by voicing and ventriloquating the (narrated) characters bring discussed. Analogously, a news broadcast is a narrating event. The events discussed, like political candidates' statements, are narrated events. As illustrated below, broadcasters implicitly evaluate candidates by voicing and ventriloquating them.

Silverstein (1988, 1993) has suggested five types of textual devices used to represent voices and evaluate them. Figure 1 summarizes these.



The following paragraphs describe these devices, and give brief examples. The next section illustrates how narrators use these devices to convey implicit moral messages, with examples from classroom discourse and television news.

I. *Reference and Predication.* Reference is the picking out of things in the world by linguistic means. Predication characterizes the objects picked out. People may be strongly or weakly characterized through the grammatical machinery that contributes to reference. Such characterizations socially identify the referents: people are referred to and predicated of such that they fit identifiable social types.

Reference to characters in a narrated world may involve the use of proper names, with or without titles, kin terms, or any of a number of other possibilities according to cultural

rules, all of which function to characterize the referent in some way. Consider these examples:

1a) Tom promised to take me to a movie this week; now the bastard [i.e., Tom] is trying to get out of it.
1b) That klutz Bob spilled coffee on me again today.

In both cases there is a strongly negative evaluation of the person referred to by the narrator, and those negative evaluations are communicated primarily through the terms used to *refer* to Tom and Bob.

A narrator referring to a character as "Mr. Johnson" or "my cousin" puts him/herself in a particular social relationship to that character, and is thereby located in a particular social universe with respect to the character. Some forms of reference strongly entail certain frameworks of relationship ("my cousin"), while others do this less ("the man").

The use of adjectives and predicational machinery by the narrator also functions to place characters, evaluatively, in a narrative. Thus a noun that has little evaluative power by itself ("the man") may be made highly evaluative by adding an adjectival string:

2a) The surly man dressed in filthy rags ...
2b) The kind-faced man in the top hat ...

With such use of language the narrator places the characters in particular social and economic groups (stereotypically defined), and takes an evaluative stance with respect to them—that is, the novelist voices and ventriloquates them.

II. *Metapragmatic descriptors*. These centrally include the so-called *verba dicendi*, or verbs of saying, which describe instances of language use (and are thus "*metapragmatic*": language used to refer to and predicate about language in use—cf. Silverstein [1976]). Characterizing someone's speech using such verbs is a powerful means of voicing and ventriloquation. Consider these alternatives:

3a) Tom spoke.
3b) Tom lied.
3c) Tom hemmed and hawed.
3d) Tom whined.
3e) Tom rhapsodized.

Each of these examples represents an instance of speaking in a particular way, with the narrator limiting the type of social role that the character Tom might be playing. In using one verb and not the others, the narrator also provides a moral evaluation of Tom.

In English, the verb "to say" is the most value-neutral of the metapragmatic verbs: in most contexts, no perspective can be discerned based on its usage alone (cf. Goossens, 1982). On the other hand, a verb like "to filibuster" describes an instance of speaking in such a way that the speaker in the narrated event (someone officious, if not actually an official) and the speech (a barrage of verbiage intended to keep others from taking the floor in an interactional event) are projected into a distinctively inhabited social role.

A related grammatical feature of languages is the nominal metapragmatic characterization of events (speeches, lies, poems, promises, etc.). These denote particular types of speech, and by characterizing the style and/or content of the speech, thereby project both narrators and speakers into social roles. A "keynote address" is a particular kind of speech normatively delivered on particular kinds of occasions—and not in the middle of a golf course, for instance.

III. *Quotation*. Quotation is a combination of reference, metapragmatic verb, and utterance to represent some instance of speaking. Quotation can range from near-absolute mimicry through quasi-direct discourse (see Volosinov 1929/1973:145) to indirect quotation. The first possibility is a conventional attempt to re-present exactly the utterance of the

speaker, while the various degrees of indirection involve translation. Consider this example, with quotations arranged from more to less direct:

4a) Tom (on the phone to the narrator): I'll be there in an hour.
4b) Narrator: Tom said, "**I'll be there in an hour.**"
4c) Narrator: Tom said, *he*'**ll be** *here* **in an hour**.
4d) Narrator: Tom said that *he*'s *coming soon*.

(In this example **bold terms** are those that remain constant from the initial statement to the translation, underlined terms are the metapragmatic verbs and related grammatical machinery that characterize the act of speaking, and italicized terms are those that change from the original statement to the translation with respect to the deictic origo of the narrator.) There are a number of effects that go with the various forms of quotation, particularly with respect to the deictics embedded in the quotation, with a tendency to relativize those deictics as quotation gets more indirect.

Note that as the quotation becomes less direct, there is a gradual shift from representation of the words of the original speaker to translation of the (implicit) message of that speaker. When a novelist puts words in a character's mouth, s/he has the opportunity to use words that identify the character as a particular sort of person—as a person who speaks with a certain voice. By choosing the quoted speech carefully, the novelist can also ventriloquate the character's words and convey her/his own implicit evaluation of the character.

IV. *Evaluative indexicals*. These are often tokens of particular registers (ways of speaking associated with a particular social group). According to the folk-sociolinguistics of every speech community, there are certain utterances (*emblems*, Silverstein [1988] calls them) that are stereotypically associated with certain types of people. These emblems may be lexical items, grammatical constructions, accents, or any of a number of other forms.

Use of evaluative indexicals (tokens of particular registers) indexes speakers as being of the social groups that characteristically use them. Speakers may index their occupations, regional origins, genders, etc., in their choice of emblems. Narrators may project their characters into particular social roles by putting particular emblems into their mouths. Consider the following passage from a short story by Thomas Pynchon:

> Presumably intelligent talk flickered around the room with the false brightness of heat lightning: in the space of a minute Siegel caught the words "Zen," "San Francisco," and "Wittgenstein," and felt a mild sense of disappointment, almost as if he had expected some esoteric language, something out of Albertus Magnus. (1959:205)

With three simple terms Pynchon characterizes (voices) an entire roomful of people.

This passage also illustrates ventriloquation. The three emblems are used in two ways: they are utterances spoken by people in the room and overheard by Siegel, and they are also held up by the narrator (Siegel) as objects, the meanings of which are primarily as indexes of particular social types. Pynchon's characterization of the talk as "presumably intelligent" expresses his evaluation of the voice represented.

Evaluative indexicals can also be adjectives or adverbs that narrators use to index a particular type of character, as in the following examples.

5a) He spoke to his secretary *haughtily*.
5b) His *haughty* demeanor irritated his compatriots.

These forms not only voice, but also ventriloquate—as they express the narrator's evaluation of the character.

V. *Epistemic modalization.* Epistemic modalization is the comparison of the epistemological status of the narrating and narrated events. Narrators can claim to have a God's-eye-view, or to be merely participating in a contingent event of speaking in the same way as the narrated characters. With respect to the narrated event, narrators can ascribe

greater epistemic access to certain characters, and less to others. The "calibration" of epistemic status across narrating and narrated events (see Silverstein, 1993) can, for instance, be accomplished through formulae that place the narrated event out of space and time—as in "once upon a time..." This work can also be done grammatically, through verb tenses.

Epistemic modalization contributes to both voicing and ventriloquation. During the 1992 presidential campaign, for example, CBS news ran a regular segment called "Reality Check"—in which reporters assessed the truth of candidates' claims. On many occasions the reporters would claim that candidates had insufficient information to substantiate their accusations about each other. Thus they voiced the candidates, characterizing them as politicians who "spin" limited information into grand, self-serving claims. And the reporters presented themselves as reasonable people who had looked up the relevant information and were now presenting all the facts. By giving themselves this privileged epistemological position, the reporters were able to ventriloquate the candidates: implicitly, the reporters aligned themselves with the public and shook their heads in disgust at the lying politicians. See Locher and Wortham (in press) for more on the trope of "objectivity" in the news.

Ventriloquation in the Classroom and on the News

As mentioned above, teachers of literature are in some ways analogous to novelists. In the classroom, with students, they discuss the events and themes of literature—a set of narrated events. In doing so, they generally present the literary characters as speaking with certain voices. And they ventriloquate those characters—thus sending implicit moral messages to students in the (narrating) classroom discussion. The following analysis illustrates this process, using excerpts transcribed from a ninth grade class discussion of

Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. The class took place in an ethnically mixed urban high school. Wortham observed this group about fifty times over one academic year. See Wortham (in press) for ethnographic background.

Julius Caesar raises many ethical issues. Two will be discussed here. In the play Cassius talks Brutus into killing Caesar. Then Caesar's friend Antony incites the Roman populace to revolt against Brutus and Cassius, in a bloody civil war. The first ethical issue is the question of how to characterize Brutus and Antony. Broadly speaking, Brutus could be either honorable or gullible. He might understand the situation and be doing what he believes is best for Rome. Or he might be getting duped by Cassius, who flatters his narcissism and gets Brutus to do something he should not. Antony could be either cynical or honorable. He might be slashing out at the conspirators who damaged his political position, without regard for whom he hurts in the process. Or he might be honorably trying to punish those who did Caesar wrong.

The teacher in this class takes a clear position on Brutus. She does this, for example, through referential devices (device #1) in the following comment: "Brutus thinks well of people; Cassius tends to suspect people." The students pick up this evaluation of Brutus and Cassius. Later in the class, one student says: "Cassius is on the bad side, and Brutus is sort of on the good side." Here the student explicitly mirrors the voicing that the teacher has done.

The teacher does not voice Antony as explicitly, but she nonetheless does so effectively. For example, she uses the following evaluative indexicals (device #4) in characterizing him:

> Why can't he just go out and knock these guys off one by one?
> What do we know about what Antony's up to?

So what is he setting up in people's minds?
This kind of skirts the edges of the agreement here.

What kind of person "knocks people off?" Not an ethical one. She could have said "assassinate," but she chose an even less flattering predicate. When do we ask what someone is "up to?" When we suspect the person of being up to no good. This predicate also portrays Antony as less than trustworthy. A person who "sets things up in people's minds" is manipulative, not fair and reasonable. And the teacher's description of whether Antony lives up to his agreement with the conspirators is also not flattering. She could have said, instead, that he "boldly disregarded his agreement with Brutus and Cassius—ignoring the danger to himself—in order to avenge the wrong done Caesar." These four ways of describing Antony index a manipulative, deceitful, untrustworthy type of person.

The teacher continues to voice Antony in this way, through her choice of metapragmatic predicates (device #2). Of all the things he says, she dwells on one line: "I don't plan on *stirring you up* to mutiny and rage." She makes a point of saying that—despite Antony's protestations—that's exactly what he's trying to do to the Romans. And, later on, she describes Antony's success: "So he's got them; he's *playing* them. He's pretty sure he's *got them on a line* now." Implicitly, these descriptions present Antony as a cynical manipulator.

Although a full account would require a much more thorough analysis of the whole transcript, these segments illustrate how the teacher voices Antony and Brutus. Even though Brutus' actions might be misguided, he is honorable. Antony, in contrast, cynically manipulates the Romans into a bloody civil war to get revenge and to maintain his own position.

This is voicing, but not yet ventriloquation. Even given these two voices, a narrator could side with either. S/he could identify with the honorable Brutus and deplore Antony's actions. Or s/he could be cynical her/himself—perhaps implying that cynicism is the only reasonable response to an absurd world—and side with Antony.

The narrator's choice here would have larger ethical implications. Antony starts a civil war in which "blood and destruction shall be so in use/ and dreadful objects so familiar/ that mothers shall but smile when they behold/ their infants quartered with the hands of war" (*Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene 1). The common people will suffer most, as they do in most wars. What moral attitude should we take toward this? If the narrator sided with the honorable Brutus, s/he might implicitly claim that—though it might be out of *noblesse oblige*—the privileged should defend commoners from victimization. If the narrator sided with the cynical Antony, she might claim that the commoners' welfare should not be our concern. This is the second ethical issue raised in the class discussion of *Julius Caesar*.

The teacher is not fully consistent in her ventriloquation. But, to some extent, she sides with Antony. At one point, in characterizing Brutus as aristocratic, she quotes him: "Brutus is not out saying all *the little people* of Rome should have a vote or something." What does the phrase "the little people" convey? On my reading it is the voice of the teacher, speaking through Brutus, scoffing at the commoners. She could have said "commoners" or "plebians." But she chose a more colorful phrase that conveys an attitude of condescension.

But perhaps this is just more voicing of Brutus. The pattern continues, however. In describing how the commoners want to crown Brutus—even though he has said that he killed Caesar because Rome should not have a tyrant—the teacher puts words into their mouths:

"the plebians say, oh I made a mistake, and we see somebody better over here." The teacher mocks the commoners' fickleness and lack of sophistication here. Later on she says, more explicitly, "the people are just jumping from one to the other." On my reading, the teacher cynically implies that the commoners are gullible and deserve what they get. With further evidence to establish a more extended pattern, we could say that she speaks through (ventriloquates) Shakespeare's play and presents an implicit moral message: when important people make decisions—even when they do so for selfish reasons—little people get hurt, and that's just too bad.

The students clearly pick up her attitude toward the Roman commoners. In response to the teacher's comments, one student says: "the people are silly." A bit more ominously, one student gives an example that might line up with the teacher's implicit message. She says: "if you got a couple of nerds and the popular people talking, you won't listen to them, you'll listen to the popular people." If nerds are the commoners of high school, this student may be taking on the condescending attitude that Antony represents. To determine whether the students actually took on the teachers' implied attitude, of course, would require much more data. The analysis here is meant only to be suggestive.

Like teachers and novelists, news correspondents represent others' speech. In doing so, they voice and ventriloquate the people they cover. The following data come from a larger analysis of network news coverage during the 1992 American presidential campaign (see Locher and Wortham, in press). In this article we only have space to analyze two brief segments from ABC and CBS national news coverage on October 8, 1992. The evening before, then-President George Bush had appeared on a national talk show and questioned candidate Bill Clinton's 1960's protest activities against the Vietnam War. In doing this,

Bush was following up suggestions by other Republicans that Clinton had been a Communist sympathizer.

Peter Jennings, the ABC News anchor, introduces the October 8 newscast as follows:

> Peter Jennings [talking in a park in California]: Good evening. We're going to begin tonight with what voters everywhere have told us they believed would happen in the final weeks of the presidential campaign: that it would get a lot nastier. Well, it has, and there's a California connection. [Video of Republican Congressman Dornan making a speech in empty House of Representatives chamber] In the last couple of weeks a California Republican Congressman named Bob Dornan has been standing up in the House of Representatives making allegations that [Close-up of Dornan's head] in January 1970 when Bill Clinton, then a student opposed to the Vietnam War was visiting Moscow, he was really there licking the boots of the KGB. [Back to Jennings in the park] Dornan has offered absolutely no evidence, and when The Washington *Post* asked if it was reponsible to make such things up , the paper says he nodded vigorously and said that he was getting rave reviews from the Bush campaign. Which is where the President comes in.

For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on the voicing and ventriloquation of Dornan. See Locher and Wortham (in press) for an extended analysis of this segment and the rest of the report that follows it. Jennings presents Dornan as a crackpot. The video of him talking energetically and gesticulating to a huge empty room makes him look ridiculous. Jennings chooses the metapragmatic descriptor (device #2) *making allegations*, which questions the truth of Dornan's claims and distances Jennings from them. Using reported speech (device #3), he also puts clearly untrue words into Dornan's mouth: Clinton "was really there licking the boots of the KGB." This description indexes (device #4) hysterical Cold War scare tactics, and identifies Dornan with anti-Communist zealots.

Jennings goes on to question the epistemological status (device #5) of Dornan's remarks more explicitly—saying "Dornan has offered absolutely no evidence." Then, citing a parallel evaluation of Dornan from fellow journalists at *The Washington Post*, he uses the metapragmatic descriptor "make such things up." So Jennings has "voiced" Dornan as a zealot making outdated, unsubstantiated accusations. In doing so, he clearly distances himself from Dornan.

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The ventriloquation here goes beyond this distancing, however. At the beginning of his remarks Jennings mentions ABC News' relationship with the American electorate, describing what "voters everywhere have told us." Although he probably refers to interviews and focus groups—relatively formal and stylized interactions—he presents these interactions as if he and the voters get along well. Judging from the reported speech Jennings narrates, the voters apparently feel comfortable using colloquial terms like "nastier" with him and his colleagues. Jennings responds to the voters' concern by reporting, colloquially, "well, it has." It is as if the voters and Peter are having a friendly conversation, and Jennings is afraid he has to tell us that those darn politicians are lying to us again. So Jennings ventriloquates Dornan by aligning himself with the electorate and shaking his head disgustedly at the lying politicians.

CBS News covered the same events in a slightly different way on October 8, 1992.

> Susan Spencer: Conservative House Republicans have mused about Clinton's anti-war past for days, implying KGB connections, hoping to entice press interest.
>
> Representative Hunter: Mr. Clinton did something that would have brought, uh, I think in the days of George Washington certainly a charge of treason.
>
> Susan Spencer: The Bush campaign has encouraged reporters too. And by elaborating himself Mr. Bush virtually guaranteed coverage. It all seems very familiar to those who remember the President's use of the Pledge of Allegiance issue against Dukakis in 1988.
>
> Susan Estrich [campaign manager for Dukakis' unsuccessful campaign against Bush in 1988]: I feel like I've seen this movie before. I mean the tactic when all else fails you call your opponent unpatriotic, suggest that he's unpatriotic, use rumors instead of facts, seems like a bad repeat from the last election.

Spencer voices the Republicans in a way similar to Jennings. Dornan and Hunter have "*mused*...for days" (device #2). What type of person muses? One who cannot do much about something, but is obsessed by it. One who does his musing by him/herself, because more reasonable people will not listen. These Republicans are also "*implying* KGB connections." They must imply, presumably, because they have no evidence.

Like Jennings' "licking the boots" representation of Dornan, Spencer's direct quotation (device #3) from Hunter associates the Republicans with outdated accusations. Hunter looks longingly toward George Washington, and accuses Clinton of "treason"—a term used more in history courses and novels than by contemporary Americans (device #4). So Spencer voices the Republicans as antiquated and not credible.

In doing this voicing, she distances herself from the Republicans. But the details of her ventriloquation differ a bit from Jennings'. The Republicans, she says, are "hoping to *entice* press interest." Those who *entice* generally have questionable morals, and lure more respectable but wavering people into scandalous activities (device #4). As Spencer is a member of the press, she is being enticed by the conservative Republicans, and "encouraged" by the Bush campaign itself. The fact that she is now reporting the Republicans' accusations means that the enticement worked to some extent.

But—like most moral people lured into something questionable—Spencer has second thoughts. She shows these in her characterization of the accusations: "it all seems very familiar." This characterization might be made of unimaginative, juvenile pranks like short-sheeting a bed or putting plastic dog excrement on the carpet. It is as if Spencer is speaking to a friend, confessing her act and expressing mild disgust at herself. The direct quotation from Estrich is like the friend's response, echoing Spencer's evaluation. Like Jennings, then, Spencer's "authorial voice" expresses mild disgust at the Republicans' tactics. But she does not present herself as detached and rational in the same way. Instead she acknowledges, and rues, her own complicity.

Conclusion

As these examples show, a systematic analysis of voicing and ventriloquation can uncover implicit moral messages in various kinds of discourse. This raises two questions. First, can we teach literature or discuss politics without giving off this sort of implicit moral message? If we want to continue discussing what people are like and what they say, we probably cannot avoid voicing and ventriloquation. All quotation, to take one of the devices, requires the teacher or the correspondent to put some words in the character's or the candidate's mouth. And all words, as Bakhtin tells us, come with some social position attached. In discussing literature or politics, we cannot help but voice and ventriloquate the characters or the candidates. Implicit moral messages are almost inevitable.

But they need not be insidious. Once we recognize how morally laden teachers' and corespondents' comments can be, perhaps we can control the process. Ventriloquation need not convey implicit messages, if teachers and journalists can discuss the issues more explicitly. In fact, the inevitability of voicing and ventriloquation might provide pedagogical opportunities. Teachers and journalists could point out the issues surrounding implicit messages and the aspects of language use that communicate these messages, and they could invite students and audiences to make up their own minds. This sort of open discussion would contribute to students' and audiences' understanding of literature and politics, and it might avoid the potentially insidious consequences of implicit moral messages.

Second, do the five devices described here exhaust the resources for voicing? The five devices for voicing are useful tools to use in analyses of implicit interactional messages. However, these five tools cannot suffice. Speakers can use other kinds of devices in voicing and ventriloquating. Furthermore, the tools cannot be applied mechanically. The process of

orchestrating an implicit message is "poetic" (Jakobson, 1960; Silverstein, 1992). Speakers do not mechanically apply rules to obtain intended outcomes. Instead, they artfully construct messages within particular interactional contexts. Any adequate analysis of actual interaction must give a contextualized account of the implicit messages. It can be productive to start by looking at the five devices for voicing presented here, but the analysis must go beyond this to show how speakers use the devices to orchestrate a coherent whole.

With this caution in mind, however, a more systematic application of Bakhtin's concepts does promise to illuminate implicit pragmatic messages. Further study of voicing and ventriloquation could describe more precisely the five devices, and perhaps uncover others. This sort of research in pragmatics might help teachers and journalists, among others, recognize and take responsibility for their implicit biases. It might help us teach non-native speakers to understand English discourse better. And it might help all of us to avoid unintended messages.

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